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October 27, 2017

Governor Jerry Brown  
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Governor Brown,

I received your letter imploring me to oppose proposed legislation to reform our nation's broken tax code. It seemed only fitting to take this opportunity to highlight your expertise on – as your letter states – “horrible ideas” on tax policy.

I recognize the role of the state and local tax deduction to reduce the tax burden on many Californians, but let's be clear: it has only become of such importance as a direct result of the tremendous weight that your misguided policies have put on California taxpayers.

Since you encouraged me to “get the facts”, here are a few that illustrate the real impact of your own policies and proposals on the tax burden of the Californians we both represent.

As a consequence of your tenure, Californians now must endure the highest sales and personal income tax rates in the entire country. In terms of our overall tax burden, the non-partisan Tax Foundation puts California's combined state and local tax burden at the 6<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation. This is in no small part because of the hikes to sales and income taxes you lobbied for and eventually got passed in Proposition 30.

When it comes to our business tax code, the numbers are even more abysmal. CNBC's America's Top States for Business report for 2017 puts California 49<sup>th</sup> in the nation for cost of doing business and 50<sup>th</sup> for business friendliness.

With friends like Sacramento, is it any wonder businesses are fleeing the rest of the state?

These numbers will only get worse, now that you've just signed into law a \$5.2 billion annual gas tax increase, stripping hard earned money out of the hands of millions of hard-working Californians in our state.

In terms of truly “horrible ideas” on tax policy, I have to say, this one takes the cake.

Government must foster an environment that promotes economic growth. Rather than sending contrived letters pretending to care about the burdens placed on taxpayers in our state, I implore you to turn away from the era of ever-increasing taxes that have continued under your Administration and instead seek policies that actually lower the tax burden on all Californians.

I will continue fighting for a fairer and simpler tax code that allows our constituents to keep more of their hard-earned money and I hope you will join me in that fight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell Issa", written in a cursive style.

Darrell Issa  
Member of Congress